

education/RFGPs. Please read all information before downloading.

Deadline for Proposals

All proposal copies must be received at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs by 5 p.m. Washington, DC time on March 31, 2003. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Documents postmarked the due date but received on a later date will not be accepted. Each applicant must ensure that the proposals are received by the above deadline.

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and twelve copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Department of State, SA-44, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ref.: ECA/PE/V-04-01, Program Management, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and physical challenges. Applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Please refer to the review criteria under the "Support for Diversity" section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal. Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106-113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

Visa Requirements: Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations. Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

Adherence to All Regulations Governing the J Visa

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places great emphasis on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by grantees, program sponsors, and participants to all regulations governing the J visa program status. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 6Z. If the applicant is a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor the applicant should provide evidence of their compliance with 22 CFR 6Z *et. seq.*, including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

ECA will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program. A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov> or from: United States Department of State, Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, ECA/EC/ECD-SA-44, Room 734, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, Telephone: (202) 401-9810, Fax: (202) 401-9809.

Review Process

The Bureau will acknowledge receipt of all proposals and will review them for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards or cooperative agreements resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

1. **Evidence of Understanding/Program Planning:** The proposal should convey that the applicant has a good understanding of the overall goals and objectives of the IV Program. It should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and be responsive to requirements stated in the RFGP and the Solicitation Package. The proposal should contain a detailed and relevant work plan that demonstrates substantive intent and logistical capacity. The plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines cited in the RFGP.

2. **Support of Diversity:** Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (selection of participants, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).

3. **Institutional Capacity:** The award recipient must have a Washington, DC presence. Applicants who do not currently have a Washington, DC presence must include a detailed plan in their proposal for establishing such a presence by October 1, 2003. The costs related to establishing such a presence must be borne by the award recipient. No such costs may be included in the budget submission in this proposal. The proposal should clearly demonstrate the applicant's capability for performing the type of work required by the IV Program and how the institution will execute its program activities to meet the goals of the IV program. It should reflect the applicant's ability to design and implement, in a timely and creative manner, professional exchange programs which encompass a variety of project themes. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program goals. Finally, the proposal also must demonstrate that the applicant has or can recruit adequate and well-trained staff.

4. **Institution's Record/Ability:** The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of a minimum of four years of successful experience in conducting IV or other professional exchange programs, which are similar in nature and magnitude to the scope of work outlined in this solicitation. Note that evidence of success includes responsible fiscal management and full